



The WisDOT Connector *Express*

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COMMUNITIES SHARE NEARLY \$9.8 MILLION IN TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS

Governor Jim Doyle has announced 28 federal Transportation Enhancement awards totaling nearly \$9.8 million that will help communities throughout the state complete bicycle and pedestrian-related projects, improvements to historic transportation structures, and downtown streetscaping efforts. The federal Surface Transportation Program funds are distributed to local public sponsors and most require a 20% local match. Projects are evaluated based on federal and state eligibility criteria and metropolitan planning organization priorities and recommendations made to the WisDOT Secretary. Municipal officials will receive letters in late 2007 notifying them of the next application cycle for the projects. A complete list of enhancement awards can be found on the WisDOT Web site at: <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/news/docs/tranenhancelist.pdf>.

GRANTS ENHANCE ELDERLY/DISABLED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

State and federal funds totaling nearly \$5.3 million will help 57 non-profit groups and local governments purchase specialized transit service vehicles over the next two years. WisDOT's Elderly and Disabled Transportation Capital Assistance program can cover up to 80% of the costs of specialized vans and buses used to meet the daily transportation needs of elderly and disabled state residents. The 2006 and 2007 grants include approximately \$3.6 million in federal dollars and about \$1.7 in state funds. The program, initiated in the mid-1970's, has helped fund the purchase of about 2,000 vehicles in Wisconsin, including the 650 active vehicles in the state, many operating in rural communities. Delivery of vehicles funded through this recent grant cycle will take place in 2007. A list of award recipients is available on the WisDOT Web site at: <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/news/docs/elderlygrantlist2006.pdf>.

STRONG HIAWATHA RIDERSHIP CONTINUES

More and more commuters are discovering the convenience and dependability of Amtrak's Hiawatha Service between Milwaukee and Chicago. August ridership totaled 55,450 - a nearly 7% increase over August 2005 - and the 22nd straight month in which the Hiawatha has set a new ridership record for that particular month. Calendar year ridership through August totals 386,895 - nearly 10% higher than over the same period in 2005. The Hiawatha remains "on track" for close to 600,000 riders by the end of this year. August's ridership gains follow a \$1 increase in Hiawatha fares that took effect August 1st. A one-way fare between the two cities now costs \$21.

SALUTE VETERANS LICENSE PLATES AVAILABLE

Anyone interested in showing their support for Wisconsin veterans can now purchase a "Wisconsin Salutes Veterans" license plate. The plates have a white background with black numbers and letters. An American bald eagle flanked by US and Wisconsin flags is on the left portion of the plate. "Wisconsin" is printed in red letters at the top with "Salutes Veterans" printed across the bottom. There is a \$15 issuance fee associated with non-personalized Wisconsin Salutes Veterans plates that goes to the Veterans Trust Fund. The plates carry no special parking privileges. More information and application forms are online at: <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/vehicles/personal/special/salutes.htm>

BUDGET TRENDS DOCUMENT UPDATED

A recently-updated edition of *Transportation Budget Trends* is now available from WisDOT's Office of Policy, Budget and Finance. The 92-page document serves as a resource for transportation professionals and those interested in how Wisconsin's state and federal transportation funds are distributed across various transportation modes. The document summarizes historic transportation budget revenues and expenditures for the period 1992 through 2005 and current information for 2006 and 2007. An Adobe PDF version of *Transportation Budget Trends* is available on-line at:

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/about/docs/budgtrend2006.pdf>.

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